



Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Law
School of Education

Research Fellow/Officer in Education

Fixed term, 70% FTE, 26.25 hours per week, available from 1 March 2017 until 29 February 2020

You will work as a Research Fellow/Officer in a small research team led by Dr Matt Homer, Principal investigator and with Co-investigators Dr Indira Banner and Mr Innocent Tsara. The project, The early take-up of Core Mathematics: successes and challenges, is investigating how a new post-16 mathematics qualification ([Core maths](#)) is being taken up in schools and colleges, and to make policy suggestions as to how the government and other agencies can best act to ensure its long-term success. The research, funded by [The Nuffield Foundation](#), is based in the Centre for Studies in Science and Mathematics Education in the School of Education at the University of Leeds.

The project takes a mixed-methods approach with secondary data analysis of national qualification data, and interviews/focus groups with students, teachers, school heads of mathematics and other stakeholders in the mathematics education/policy world. There are also online-surveys to students and teachers. You will be mainly responsible for the organising and carrying out the field-work in schools/colleges and elsewhere, but all team members will be expected contribute to all elements of the project including instrument design, data generation, data analysis, reporting and dissemination.

You will hold or be working towards a relevant doctorate, ideally in the social sciences (or have equivalent research experience), and you will have experience of conducting research in schools/colleges. Experience of qualitative research methods is essential, and experience of teaching school mathematics, and mathematics educational research is preferred.

You will be supported to collaborate on academic outputs including publications, and will be provided with training in research methods relevant to your experience and the requirements of the project. The ability to work alone or as part of a team is also essential, along with project management skills and the ability to deal with a variety of tasks to set deadlines. A degree of travel within the UK is involved, possibly including overnight stays when visiting schools/colleges and other research sites a long way from Leeds.

The University of Leeds is a diverse, multi-cultural environment. We welcome applications from all sections of society and you will be expected to work within University values and policies which are designed to promote dignity, diversity and inclusiveness.

University Grade 7 (£32,004 - £38,183 p.a. pro-rata.) The salary spine point is subject to external funding conditions, which will limit the salary at which an appointment can be made to a maximum of £32,958 p.a. pro-rata.

Informal enquiries are welcome and may be made to Dr Matt Homer, tel +44 (0)113 343 4654, email m.s.homer@leeds.ac.uk

Ref: ESLED1030

Click here for further information about working at the University of Leeds
www.leeds.ac.uk/info/20025/university_jobs

Job Description

Responsible to: Head of School

Reports to: Dr Matt Homer

Main duties and responsibilities

- To carry out an initial literature review related to barriers to post-16 mathematics uptake, and related policy documents.
- Designing appropriate research instruments – e.g. interview and focus group schedules, and online surveys.
- To plan and carry out interviews and focus groups with Core maths students, teachers and other stakeholders.
- Carrying out qualitative data analysis of interview/focus group data, and online survey data.
- Liaison with the project Advisory Board and the funder in relation to all aspects of the project – including research design, fieldwork, analysis and findings.
- To develop a personal research agenda, in collaboration with colleagues in the School of Education.
- Collaborating with the research team on the development of project reports and publications relating to research findings, for submission to high-quality journals.
- To contribute to the submission of at least one substantial application for funding, with the aim of developing your research.
- Presenting research findings to academic and professional audiences and communicating complex ideas in accessible ways.
- To review and evaluate the work of others in the context of relevant research projects.
- Carry out administrative and project management duties assisted by the PI and the Research Support Services at the University of Leeds.
- Any other duties which may be commensurate within the role and grade.
- To be aware of the risks in the work environment.
- To continue to update knowledge and develop skills.
- To demonstrate a commitment to the University's agreed values
- To participate actively as a member of the School of Education, contributing to the activities in the Centre for the Studies of Science and Mathematics Education and the wider school.
- To assist the team in developing new research and practitioner networks that help enhance and disseminate the findings from the project. This could include social-media activities – web-pages, blogs and micro-blogs.

University Values

All staff are expected to operate in line with the university's values and standards, which work as an integral part of our strategy and set out the principles of how we work together. More information about the university's strategy and values is available at

<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/comms/strategy/> .

Person Specification

Essential

Qualifications and knowledge

- Completed or working towards a doctorate (within 6 months of completion) in a relevant subject area, ideally within the social sciences (or commensurate research experience).
- A good mathematics background, ideally including A-level or equivalent.
- Demonstrable knowledge of qualitative research methods.
- Knowledge and/or experience of computer software packages designed for qualitative data analysis (e.g. Nvivo).
- Good word processing and general IT skills.

Experience

- Experiences of working in schools/colleges, ideally as a mathematics teacher.
- Experience of carrying out focussed literature reviews.
- Proven experience of in-depth qualitative data collection, analysis and writing.
- Excellent interviewing skills and the ability to conduct interviews and focus groups with young people, teachers and other professionals.
- Experience of presenting research findings to professional and/or academic audiences.
- Experience of managing a workload using appropriate project-management tools.
- Experience of working independently on own initiative but also as an effective team member.

Personal attributes and skills

- Excellent organisational skills with the demonstrable ability to manage time effectively, liaising with project partners and prioritising tasks to meet internal and external deadlines.
- A high level of interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to communicate effectively at all levels.
- A commitment to ongoing professional development.
- Availability to travel to research sites, usually schools/colleges, within the UK.

Desirable criteria

- Experience as a mathematics teacher.
- An awareness of issues and debates in mathematics education research and policy.
- Knowledge and/or experience of computer software packages designed for quantitative data analysis (e.g. SPSS, Stata).
- Academic publishing experience, and report writing for external funders.
- A developing track record of high quality research and writing.

- Experience and track record in network building and stakeholder engagement at national level.

Additional Information

Details of the terms and conditions of employment for all staff at the University, including information on pensions and benefits, are available on the Human Resources web pages accessible at <http://hr.leeds.ac.uk/>

The Partnership

The Partnership has been developed by students and staff and describes the mutual expectations of us all as members of the University of Leeds community. More information about the Partnership is available at <http://partnership.leeds.ac.uk>

Criminal Record Checks

This post is covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and as such, applicants who have 'unspent' convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings, including any pending criminal proceedings, must declare this in the 'other personal details' section of the application form and send details to the Recruitment Officer at disclosure@leeds.ac.uk

Criminal record information will be held securely by the University and in accordance with the Data Protection Act and the University's Data Protection policy, available at http://www.leeds.ac.uk/secretariat/data_protection_code_of_practice.html

Any offer of appointment will be in accordance with our policy, a copy of which is available at http://hr.leeds.ac.uk/criminal_records

Disabled Applicants

The post is located in the School of Education. Disabled applicants wishing to review access to the building are invited to contact the department direct. Additional information may be sought from the Recruitment Officer, email disclosure@leeds.ac.uk or tel + 44 (0)113 343 1723.

Disabled applicants are not obliged to inform employers of their disability but will still be covered by the Equality Act once their disability becomes known.

Further information for applicants with disabilities, impairments or health conditions is available in the applicant guidance.